

11.17.13

November | 2013

Reflections on Comparisons

Last weekend I attended the annual Hawaii Pacific Baptist Convention meeting at the Hawaii Baptist Academy. It has been a few years since I attended this annual meeting and it was a little eye opening. It has been many more years since I have visited the Hawaii Baptist Academy. As I reflect on last weekend's experience, I would like to share with you several revelations.

I used to work at the Hawaii Baptist Academy (HBA) as the Director of Religious Activities (the school's chaplain), from 1976-1979. I was able to get reacquainted with many staff members that I used to work with and to meet new staff members. I was able to see how the campus has grown and developed into a first class educational institution. I noticed that I was a very young and naïve young man back in the 1970's. As I compared myself to my contemporaries, I realized that I am an old man, as many of my contemporaries are now retired or are soon to be retired. What a sobering revelation.

I was also able to get reacquainted with many ministers and realized that I am truly a part of the greying generation. My

contemporaries here are not only greying, but they are also getting fuller around the mid-section and are becoming medical experts as they are dialoging more and more with doctors about their own medical difficulties. What a sobering revelation, as I could not help but compare my situation to my contemporaries who surrounded me.

However, what shocked and grieved me more than anything came when I looked into the HPBC Annual Book of Reports. Here is where I experienced my most sobering encounter of the whole weekend.

The Hawaii Pacific Baptist Convention consists of 129 churches located all over Hawaii, throughout the South Pacific, and even in Okinawa and South Korea. Churches ranging in membership from 8 to 1,840. Churches that have an average attendance ranging from 9 to 750. Churches that have baptized from 0 to 129. Churches whose yearly undesignated offerings ranged from \$140 to \$1,008,803.

I almost began to feel very proud of Valley Isle Fellowship because:

1. With 28 baptisms, we were in the #4 spot.
2. With a membership of 159, we were in the #22 spot.
3. With a regular attendance, at that time of 203, we were in the #8 spot.
4. With an annual undesignated offering of \$377,737, we were in the #10 spot.

My pride was beginning to run away with me, until the Lord stopped me. The Lord began to reveal to me that we, Valley Isle Fellowship, are not doing very well. He began to remind me that we are losing people rather than gaining people. He began to remind me that we have taught people to witness but only 28 people have been saved and baptized in a whole year and that is rather shameful. If we really loved the Lord and were sold out to Him, that number should be at least 4 times greater. He finally reminded me that if we had won those people to the Lord, would we have been faithful to disciple them, because we are not being very effective in discipling the few that have been baptized.

I tried to say to the Lord, "But Lord, if you look at what we are doing in comparison to the majority of the other HPBC churches, we are doing pretty good." Then it seemed as the Lord said to me loudly and clearly, "Who said that you should compare yourself to any other church! What have I called you to do and how obedient and effective have you been in achieving what I called you to do?"

I was humbled and my pride was broken as I realized that we are falling very short of what God is calling us to do. When God calls us, it is so very wrong to justify and rationalize our failures by comparing what we do with what others do. The standard is

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The Light of the World

John 8:12-30 (ESV)

1. The claim (vs. 12)
 - a. He is claiming to be the _____.
 - b. He is claiming to be _____.
2. The setting (vs. 20)
 - a. The place was _____.
 - b. The timing was _____.
3. The accusation (vs. 13)
 - a. They thought they _____ him with _____.
 - b. There is not enough _____ to _____ unbelief.
4. The only witnesses that count (vs. 14-18)
 - a. They had rejected _____ and _____.
 - b. The _____ witnesses are Jesus and the Father.
5. The indictment (vs. 19)
 - a. They were _____.
 - b. You can't have the _____ without _____.
6. The reality of sin and the hope of belief (vs. 21-24)
 - a. Sin _____ and Christ _____.
 - b. They ignore his _____.
7. A question of identity (vs. 25-29)
 - a. This is a _____ question.
 - b. Jesus ties his _____ to _____ and _____ with the Father.
8. Do you believe? (vs. 30)
 - a. Jesus is all that he _____ to be.
 - b. Jesus _____ all that the _____ he did.

NOTES:

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never what others do, but what God calls us to do. God does not call us to failure! God does not call us to shame or regret! God calls us to glorify Him!

You see God provides everything we need to be successful in fulfilling what He calls us to do. He provides all of the resources, influences, circumstances and everything else that we need in order to do what He has called us to do. The only missing ingredient is what we will do with love and obedience to Jesus Christ, which will lift us above every fear and obstacle.

God has been driving me to my knees ever since that revelation. Reflecting on comparing myself to the standards of this world has been tempting me to let pride rise in an ungodly manner. God has been humbling me and revealing that the only standard that is acceptable to Him is His standard. His standard is what He has called me to, not to compare myself with everyone else.

I now realize that God desires all of us to accomplish only what He has called us to, no more and no less. I had to ask God for His forgiveness and cleansing. I had to cry out to Him and ask Him to fill me with His Holy Spirit because that is the only way that I can accomplish His calling in my life. Yes, I can do a lot in my own strength, but I cannot do all that God calls me to do without His spirit's work in my life. I need to do His will in His way with His power. That is the only way to accomplish God's call.

Dear People of Valley Isle Fellowship, please know that we need to be broken of our pride so that we can be filled with His Holy Spirit. Please know that we can no longer compare ourselves to what others may or may not be doing. We can only measure ourselves to that which God has called us. That is the only standard of measurement that really counts. Let's pledge to ourselves, and most importantly to God, that we will keep His standard always before us. God bless you.

Pastor Stephen Kaneshiro

The Will Of the Father Is...

Finale

The last two articles have been on what, "The Will of the Father is..." and the answer to that, which was in the first article I wrote, is that everyone may be given the opportunity to believe in His son Jesus. The second article was on what does that look like? The answer was to share the gospel with them and I gave you some examples of where I began and with whom I shared the gospel with.

Today I am finishing up this topic on, "how are we able to share the gospel with people and make disciples of them in Jesus' name?"

Jesus was asked by a religious leader what the greatest commandment in all of the Law of Moses was. We need to first know two things before I answer that question. One, the Jews followed the Law of Moses that was given by God. God told Moses everything that He had, to pass on to the people of Israel so they would live the right life according to Him. You can include the Ten Commandments and all of the Levitical Laws, the written laws. Second, there is the Oral Law. This is when the religious leaders would interpret God's laws to mean what it says and how to apply it. In the Oral laws there are about 613 laws to apply. So with all the Laws of Moses and the Oral Laws of man you have just an enormous amount of rules and regulations to follow, or as we would put it in simple terms a lot of do's and don'ts. Now, with knowing all that, let's get back to the question that Jesus was asked. Which is the greatest commandment in all of the Law of Moses? I want you to pay close attention to how Jesus responded in Matthew 22:37- 40

³⁷Jesus replied, "You must love the lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind. ³⁸this is the first and greatest commandment. ³⁹A second is equally important: "Love your neighbor as yourself." ⁴⁰The entire law and all the demands of the prophets are based on these two commandments."

What motivates a Christian to love God the Father? To obey, serve and honor Him? You might also add the question, how are we able to share the gospel and make disciples?

There is only one answer to all of these questions and do you know what it is?

The answer is because we know that God loves us!

Jesus said to love God, however, I believe we do not really understand the love that God the Father truly has for us. Do we truly know that God loves us? We can't love someone whom we know nothing about, right? In order to love God we need to know that He loves us. Let me spend the time giving you some bullet points that shows God loves us.

1. God is Love¹.
2. God loves us and it is revealed through Jesus².
3. God loves us first³.
4. God gives His unfailing love to us⁴.
5. God becomes our Father and we are His children⁵.
6. God gives us His Spirit⁶.

We begin knowing that God is Love, and that His love is seen and given through Jesus and His love is secured in us by the Holy Spirit.

We can know, and we do know, that God loves us because Jesus did the Father's will by telling everyone that the Father has sent Him, so that whoever believes in Him will be forgiven of their sins and receive eternal life. Jesus and his disciples shared with everyone who was willing to listen and believe. So, in order to know that God loves us, all we need to do is look to the gospel (Jesus) and *abide* in Him. The Greek word for abide is *meno* and it literally means, "to make our home in." We can know for sure that God loves us if we give up our lives to Jesus and live in a relationship with Him. So think about this, you can be sure that when you share the gospel and make disciples, it is because you are working from knowing God loves you through Christ and by the power of the Holy Spirit⁷. Christians show their love for God by their loving willing obedience that stems from a deep abiding relationship with Jesus. When

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Prayer that Changes the World

2 Chronicles 7:13-14 (NLT) ¹³*At times I might shut up the heavens so that no rain falls, or command grasshoppers to devour your crops, or send plagues among you.* ¹⁴*Then if my people who are called by my name will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sins and restore their land.*

- I. No _____ = No _____
- II. Prayer Without _____ = No _____
- III. Times of _____ & _____ = Time to _____ the Lord
- IV. The **Need** = “_____” kind of people
Matthew 26:39 (NLT) ³⁹*He went on a little farther and bowed with his face to the ground, praying, “My Father! If it is possible, let this cup of suffering be taken away from me. Yet I want your will to be done, not mine.”*
- V. The _____ = _____
2 Timothy 3:12 (NLT) ¹²*Yes, and everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.*
- VI. _____ without _____ = _____

Please view the following video and respond lovingly & obediently to what the Lord places on your heart:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=40F5wMbjugE>

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every Christian believes and knows this, then the supernatural work of God will become the natural way of life for us. Thus, fulfilling the will of the Father which is to give everyone an opportunity to believe in His son for the forgiveness of their sins, and receive eternal life to be spent worshipping God now and forever.

¹1John 4:16, ²1John 3:16, 1John 4:9, ³1John 4:9, ⁴Psalms 33:5, Psalms 48:9, Psalms 107:8, ⁵1John 3:1-2, ⁶Romans 8:1-17, 1John 4:4, ⁷Acts 1:8

God Bless,
Pastor Darren

A Call To Serve, Part 2

Let me 1st say that if you have any questions please feel free to call me at the church office (244-0865) or on my cell (419-8100). I welcome your questions and suggestions.

Childcare, the care of all of our children under the age of 18, is an area of great need. However, there are other areas of great need. This week let me high-light areas of service.

Set-Up & Tear-Down Every Sunday

In a church like ours, ministry becomes much more powerful and enjoyable when all of our people work together to advance the cause of Christ. A lot of work is required in order for us to be able to have our services and ministries.

Every Sunday morning at 6 AM a few of us gather at the cafeteria in order to clean and transform the cafeteria into our worship center. Some of us have to load up some equipment and supplies prior to getting to the cafeteria, but once we arrive, things get very busy. The group moves out the cafeteria tables, sweeps, mops and moves the chairs out of the container and into the cafeteria. Another team set-ups and adjusts the sound system, while others clean and replenish supplies in the bathrooms. Also, banners are set-up, tables and supplies are arranged and then we close in prayer. We have to try to work as quietly as possible so that we do not bother our neighbors.

This means trying to talk softly and moving tables, chairs, equipment and supplies as quietly as possible. This can be a challenge.

The numbers are very small and only their love for the Lord, and for Valley Isle Fellowship, drives them to continue year after year. These faithful few, miss only a few times a year and only when they are off island or when they are sick. There are no substitutes, therefore if one of the faithful few is out of commission, the other few just do more and complete the work for the glory of the Lord. Their faithfulness goes unnoticed and unappreciated by the majority who enjoy the benefits of their hard work. However, the praise of men do not drive this Spartan and faithful group. It is a privilege to work alongside these faithful giants in faith and service.

So what can you do? You could come alongside of these giants in service and help to lighten their burden. Their lives will truly bless you. It would be great if one or both of the following could be realized. First, that the burden would be lightened, made easier and maybe even finish a little earlier. Second, that we would be able to have several rotating teams so that the faithful do not have to feel guilty when they cannot be there.

Let me encourage you to pray about being a part of this ministry. You do not need a special calling or a special giftedness. All you need is a love for the Lord and a desire to bring Him glory and honor.

Set-Up & Tear-Down for Special Services in Waikapu

This is one area of service that I want to praise you all for. A good number of people come out every time the call is given and you always come out with a great spirit of joy and service. We want you to continue to come out and help and we want to encourage others to come. We are now completing all of the work in about 3 to 4 hours. With more coming out to help, we would be increasing the fellowship, lightening the load for the faithful and cutting the time of completion. But I want to say thank you for glorifying the Lord through your service.

When it comes to tear-down and clean-up,

the numbers are smaller. We could use many more in this service area. We are so grateful for the many who pull double duty as they have worked to set-up and then stay and tear-down. This is another area of service that many of you should pray about and consider being a part of. Your service here can continue and empower glory and honor being given to the Lord.

Caring for What God has Already Given to Us

In the past, we had the resources to pay others to come and take care of what God has so graciously given to us. We are no longer in that situation because of the decrease in attendance. Therefore, we are in need of people to come and help us in caring for the properties that God has entrusted to us.

There is a need to coordinate the care of our buildings and properties on High Street. This means yard care, building repairs maintenance and janitorial services. Pastor Jeremy is currently doing the yard care for the High Street properties and for the Waikapu property. As you can imagine, that is a very daunting task. Help in these areas are needed.

Since the end of September, we have been without any janitorial help so I am trying to do whatever is minimally needed to keep our bathrooms and rooms clean. Help would be greatly appreciated.

Repairs and maintenance of our worship center, and Annex, on High Street is also my responsibility. If something breaks down and needs maintenance and repairs, it is my responsibility to either fix it, get someone else to fix it, or to hire someone to do it. This is an area of anxiety for me because I have very little knowledge and skills needed to take care of these needs. It is difficult to get in touch with people who may have knowledge and who are willing to give the time to take care of these issues. Therefore, we have to hire people to come and it is always expensive.

Most churches have a committee to take care of this area. However, before I came

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to VIF, all the members of this committee, resigned.

Conclusion

As you can see, the needs are great, and we are minimally getting by. We can continue to minimally get by, however, I do not believe that this brings glory and honor to the Lord. Many times, needs go by unmet until it is on the verge of becoming a crisis. This is when it becomes a priority that can no longer be ignored. Here is where we can give our service and bring glory and honor to the Lord by taking care of what He has entrusted to us.

There are so many service areas that we can all be of help. If everyone gave a little, much could be accomplished. If everyone who says that they love the Lord, would just sacrifice in a loving way, then we could see the Lord glorified in a big way.

Next week, we will conclude this 3 part series with Ministry needs. Are you beginning to see that there is a place for you? In fact, are you getting the idea that we want you and need you? God bless you as you pray about where God would lead you.

Pastor Stephen Kaneshiro



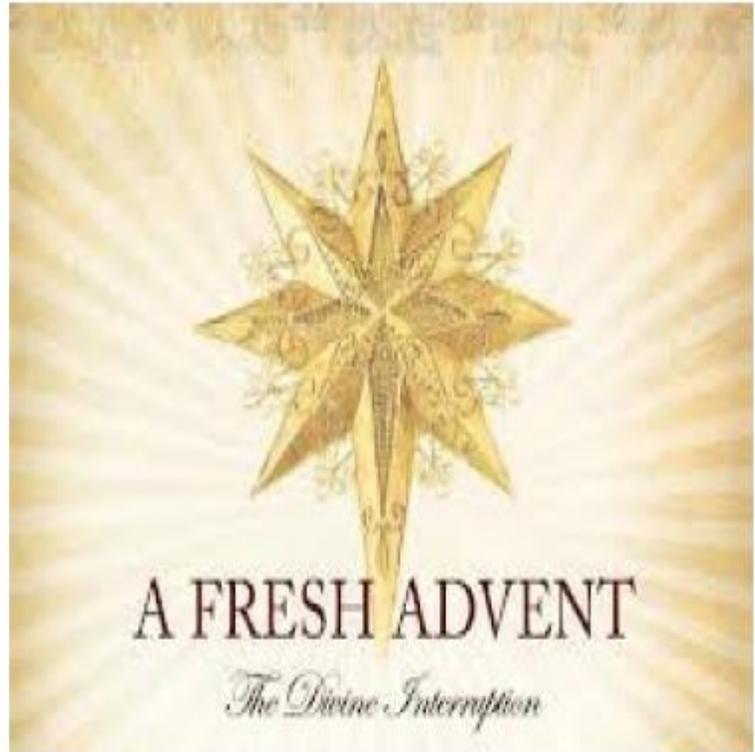
Child Care Schedule

Team 3: Gretel Saraos, Rosie Quenga, Daniel Quenga, Shalia Mendez, Danica Cooley, Dyllan Caolie

Team 4: Karen Fontanilla, Janice Robello, Judy Giron, Jaydee Giron, Jules Giron, Kolbe Fontanilla, Alysha Fontanilla, Hannah Aiwohi

Nov 17th—Team 3
Nov 24th—None
Dec 1st—Team 4

Calling all Women



It's time to *Refresh, Reflect & Renew* yourself with God this Christmas season.

Please join us for the VIF women's fellowship

December 7, 2013

8 a.m. to 10 a.m.

Valley Isle Fellowship Worship Center

For more information call the office at 244-0865

Or Lani Sarmiento

Correction

I have to apologize for reporting some wrong information. I will try to do better in reporting the facts to you. Please take the following as the actual facts.

I told you about a Catholic couple who owned a "bed & breakfast" Inn in Vermont who were sued for simply stating their beliefs. This was not completely correct. Let me try to give you a synopsis of their testimony, but you can also go to <http://marriageada.org/the-oreillys/> to get their direct testimony.

Jim and Mary Oreilly own the Wild Flower Inn in Lyndonville, VT. In 2000, Civil Unions became legal in Vermont and a lesbian couple called to inquire about using their facilities for their ceremony. The Oreillys responded by saying that they were strong Catholics and that allowing this on their property would be going against their beliefs. The couple filed a complaint with the Vt. Human Rights Commission. Then in 2005, the Oreilly's Policy of Disclosure was upheld.

Then in 2009, Same-sex Marriage became legal in Vermont. In 2010, the Wild Flower Inn received an email inquiry from a gay couple. The Inn's Wedding Coordinator responded promptly and communicated their Policy of Disclosure. This is a statement of (a) who they are, (b) what they are and (c) why they are. The Wedding Coordinator said that because of this policy, they would not be able to hold their ceremony at the Wild Flower Inn. However, she proceeded to offer her personal services to this couple.

Then in April of 2011, the Wedding Coordinator talked with the Oreillys in a state of panic. She said that she was contacted by the ACLU about the above situation. She resigned at that time, and on July 19, 2011 the Oreillys were notified by email by the ACLU that they were being sued.

The end result after much intimidation and much expense, the Oreillys were found guilty. The irony of this is that in the 2005 decision, their "Policy of

Disclosure" was up-held. They have spent much and suffered much. Please be in prayer for the Oreillys.

Pastor Stephen Kaneshiro

Condolences

Pastor Steve and the rest of the staff wish to express our deepest condolence to Richard Yamasaki as he has lost his brother.

Seniors Christmas Luncheon

Thursday, December 12, 2013
Kahili Restaurant (Waikapu)
1030am - 2pm

Menu to be circulated: select dish prior to event

Note: No grab bag gift exchange. In place of grab bag gift, a \$5 cash donation is requested. Amount collected will be donated to a VIF family in need.

Deadline to sign-up: Sunday, December 08, 2013

Contact: Thelma Waki (242-7248)
 Or
 Cecile Hashimoto (878-3739)

VIF Surf Ministry 2013-2014 Calendar

Mark your calendars for the following dates.

November 25, 2013 - Mon - 8am-12pm
 Kalepolepo Beach Park

December 23, 2013 - Mon - 8am-12pm
 Kalama Bch Park

January 20, 2014 - Mon - 8am-12pm
 Cove park

March 24, 2014 - Mon - 8am-12pm
 Launiupoko Beach Park

May 26, 2014 - Mon - 8am-2pm
 1000 Peaks 8am-2pm

June 30, 2014 - Mon - 8am-12pm
 Kalepolepo Beach Park

July 28, 2014 - Mon - 8am-12pm
 Kalama Beach Park

CALENDAR

November 2013						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
17 AM - Pastor Jeremy PM - Pastor Stephen	18 Operation Christmas Child box drop off	19 Operation Christmas Child box drop off	20 Operation Christmas Child box drop off Youth Group: 630pm- Sanctuary Prayer Meeting: 7pm-Annex	21 Operation Christmas Child box drop off	22 Operation Christmas Child box drop off	23 Operation Christmas Child box drop off Work Day: 7am- Waikapu Property
24 Operation Christmas Child box drop off Thanksgiving Service: 9am- Pastor Darren	25 Operation Christmas Child box drop off - FINAL Surf Ministry: 8am-12pm- Kalepolepo Beach Park	26	27 Youth Group: 630pm- Sanctuary Prayer Meeting: 7pm-Annex	28 Church Office Closed	29	30

December 2013						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 AM - Pastor Jeremy PM - Pastor Stephen	2	3	4 Youth Group: 630pm- Sanctuary Prayer Meeting: 7pm-Annex	5	6	7 VIF Women's Fellowship: 8am-10am - Sanctuary
8 AM - Pastor Darren PM - Pastor Stephen	9	10	11 Youth Group: 630pm- Sanctuary Prayer Meeting: 7pm-Annex	12	13	14
15 AM - Pastor Stephen PM - Pastor Darren	16	17	18 Youth Group: 630pm- Sanctuary Prayer Meeting: 7pm-Annex	19	20	21

ANNOUNCEMENTS

9

Operation Christmas Child – Christmas is right around the corner and this year we are partnering again with Samaritan's Purse and thousands of churches across the globe, to send shoe boxes filled with toys, stuffed animals, school supplies and clothes to children around the world! You may never know the impact your shoebox will have on a child's life thousands of miles away from you but you can have confidence that the Lord has been using this ministry to reach children with the good news of Jesus Christ for 20 years and 100 million shoe boxes. Each box will be packed with a wonderful gospel tract that will share the good news of Jesus Christ and hand delivered by the local churches and missionaries around the world in some of the most closed societies to the gospel. So, please join us in this opportunity to share the love of Christ with a child this Christmas.

When is it due?

November 18-21

How can I get more information?

<http://www.samaritanspurse.org/what-we-do/operation-christmas-child/>

<http://www.samaritanspurse.org/operation-christmas-child/frequently-asked-questions/>

Youth Fundraiser – Interested in supporting the Youth Ministry and helping the environment? The Youth are collecting empty ink cartridges or toners from your computer printer for recycling to support their various activities. You may drop off your empty cartridges in the lime green plastic bin by the door in the sanctuary.

Why the Newsletter

This Newsletter is an attempt to communicate, explain, challenge, direct, and instruct all of the people of VIF on the issues and events that are of concern to us. We want to encourage a spirit of openness and cooperation that will build a church that glorify and honor the Lord. We want to encourage you to submit articles that would help to accomplish the above goals. We also want to give you a chance to respond to anything that you read in the Newsletter and/or hear in the church. We want this to be your newsletter. As your pastor, I will be the final authority as to what does or does not go into this newsletter. Love for Jesus Christ and bringing Him glory and honor will be the criterion for making those decisions.

Thanksgiving Service Work Day

Come join us on Saturday, November 23rd, as we setup the Waikapu Property for our Thanksgiving service on Sunday, November 24th.

We will meet at the High Street campus at 7am and start work at the Waikapu property at 730am.

COME JOIN US in this awesome time of fellowship and service.

Many hands make light work.

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